

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sunaga (USPN 7,262,736). The application that issued as the Sunaga patent was filed on May 24, 2005. The present application is a US national stage application of PCT No. PCT/JP04/17399, which was filed on **November 24, 2004** ("the PCT filing date"). The present application subsequently entered the US national stage on May 8, 2006. However, the filing date of the present application is the PCT filing date. See MPEP § 1893.03(b). The PCT filing date of the present application occurred prior to the filing of the Sunaga application. Therefore, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) are improper and should be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. NGB-40374.

Respectfully submitted,
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